(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this decision amount to infringement of the rights of the workers;

(d) whether Government evolved any alternative mechanism to ensure the social security measures for the employees; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) to (e) It has been decided that in respect of Special Economic Zones, the State Government may apply for exemption, to the Central Government under Section 16(2) of the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, from the applicability of the provisions of the Act to SEZ for 5 years. The decision shall be . taken on case-to-case basis.

Upgradation of ESI Hospitals and Dispensaries in Karnataka

298. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether any initiatives for upgrading ESI Hospitals and dispensaries in Karnataka has been taken up;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ESI hospital in Bangalore has been declared as a referral centre for all ESI hospitals in the State;

(d) if so, the facilities proposed to be provided there;

(e) whether there is any proposal to close down or merge some of the ESI dispensaries in the State which are not viable; and

(f) the amount proposed to be spent during the year 2003-04 for upgrading ESI hospitals and dispensaries in the State?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Modern equipment worth Rs. 325.61 lakhs has been sanctioned to upgrade ESI Hospitals/Dispensaries in Karnataka under various action plans.

(c) The ESI Corporation has taken over the ESI Hospital, Rajajinagar, Bangalore to develop it into a Model and referral Hospital for the State of Karnataka.

(d) All secondary care facilities will be provided through this hospital.

(e) The ESI Corporation has issued detailed guidelines for rationalisation of ESI scheme to provide satisfactory services to the beneficiaries and the State Government is in the process of rationalisation.

(f)The ESI Corporation has sanctioned Modern Equipment worth Rs. 105.50 lakhs to upgrade the ESI Hospitals/Dispensaries in Karnataka during 200304.

Fixed term contractual employment

299. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to introduce fixed term contactual employment in place of permanent jobs; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) and (b) A proposal to amend the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946 to include "Fixed Term Employment Workman" in the Schedule of the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946 and Model Standing Orders annexed to the Industrial Emloyment (Standing Orders) Central Rules, 1946 is under consideration of the Government at present.

A fixed term employment workman will be engaged on the basis of contract of employment for a fixed period. However, his working hours, wages, allowances and other benefits shall not be less than that of a permanent workman. He shall also be eligible for all statutory benefits available to a permanent workman proportionately according to the period of service rendered by him even though his period of employment does not extend to the qualifying period of employment.